

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough consideration provided in the present application. Claims 1-30 are currently pending in the instant application. Claims 1 and 3-16 have been amended. Claim 1 and 17 are independent.

Claims 17-30 have been added for the Examiner's consideration. Applicants submit that the subject matter of additional claims 17-30 is fully supported by the original written description, including, but not limited to FIGs. 1 and 9, original claims 1-16 and pages 8-14 of the specification. Reconsideration of the present application is earnestly solicited.

Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication of the receipt and consideration of the Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 25, 2004.

Priority

Applicants would appreciate the Examiner's indication of acceptance of the certified copy of the corresponding priority document for the present application filed on March 25, 2004 and acknowledgment of Applicants' timely claim for priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119.

Drawings

Applicants would appreciate the Examiner's indication of acceptance of the formal drawings filed on March 25, 2004. Since the Examiner has not cited any informalities with the drawings and/or has not provided a copy of a Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948), Applicants submit that the formal drawings should be approved. Accordingly, Applicants will not take any further action with respect to the drawings.

Specification

Applicants have voluntarily amended the specification to address minor informalities with the Abstract of the Disclosure. However, Applicants submit that the foregoing, non-narrowing amendments have not been made responsive to any statutory rejection advanced by the Examiner.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Nakazawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,306,381). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Without conceding the propriety of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to expedite the prosecution of the present application, Applicants have voluntarily amended claim 1 to clarify the claimed subject matter for the benefit of the Examiner. However, Applicants submit that these non-narrowing amendments have been made to merely explicitly state those features that were already implicitly claimed in original claim 1. As discussed in greater detail hereinafter, Applicants submit that the rejection based upon the Nakazawa et al. reference should be withdrawn.

With respect to claim 1, the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the combination of limitations of the claimed invention, including the feature(s) of: "a controller including a heater temperature control part for operatively controlling heaters for said pair of heat rollers; *an arithmetic processing part controlling whether said double-side lamination system is in a double-side lamination mode in which laminations are carried out on both surfaces of said card, or in a single-side lamination mode in which lamination is carried out on only one of said surfaces of said card, said arithmetic processing part being operatively connected to an output terminal of said at least one temperature sensing element to automatically distinguish between the double-side lamination mode and the single-side lamination mode by comparing measured temperatures of said heat rollers by said at least one temperature sensing*

element at a predetermined time after turn-on of the power of said double-side lamination system with a predetermined reference temperature.” (Emphasis Added) Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Applicants submit that the Examiner has not accorded any patentable weight to many of the structural elements and the functional language relating the various elements of the system to one another. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claim 1 to positively recite the unique combination of limitations of claim 1, including the features of a controller having an arithmetic processing part. Applicants submit that the alleged functional language of the arithmetic processing part should be considered as it relates to the processing capabilities of the controller, e.g., the processes that the arithmetic processing part is designed to perform.

Alternatively, Applicants have also submitted claims 25-30 which positively recite method steps which are performed by the system of claim 1. Further, Applicants submit that Nakazawa et al. reference does not appear to teach or suggest any operation of the laminating apparatus (FIG. 1, FIG. 6) in a single-side lamination mode. The Examiner’s opinion that a simple removing of one of the webs of Nakazawa et al. is not supported by this reference as Nakazawa et al. is clearly directed at double-side lamination mode with a pair of webs, and pairs of numerous elements such as pressure rollers 40a, 40b

designed to operate in double-side lamination mode only. If a second web is simply removed as alleged by the Examiner, the Nakazawa et al. device would still supply heat to the surface of the item to be laminated thereby potentially damaging or unnecessarily heating a surface of the item. Therefore, Nakazawa et al. clearly does not make any provisions for operation in a single-side lamination mode and the Examiner's suggestion that the Nakazawa et al. apparatus can be operated in a single-side lamination mode is improper. Accordingly, Applicants submit that this rejection is improper and should be withdrawn.

In accordance with the above discussion of the patents relied upon by the Examiner, Applicants respectfully submit that these documents, either in combination together or standing alone, fail to teach or suggest the invention as is set forth by the claims of the instant application.

As to the dependent claims, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are allowable due to their dependence upon an allowable independent claim, as well as for additional limitations provided by these claims.

CONCLUSION

Since the remaining references cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but merely to show the state-of-the-art, no further comments are deemed necessary with respect thereto.

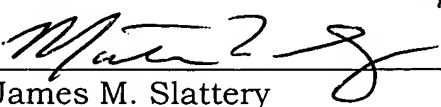
In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Matthew T. Shanley, Registration No. 47,074 at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment: Replacement Abstract of the Disclosure